

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EB-11 SP-03 SPM-01 SWF-02 IO-14

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DRC-01 RSC-01 SSO-00 /144 W
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R 201518Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2745

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1342

AFDROUGHT

DAKAR FOR FFPO

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MAURITANIA AIRLIFT

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 1286

1. SUMMARY: VISITED NEMA SEPTEMBER 19 FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH FIRST REGION GOVERNOR AND JTF KING GRAIN COMMANDER COLONEL HARP ON GRAIN AIRLIFT OPERATIONS. BOTH GOVERNOR AND HARP REPORTED SATISFACTION WITH OPERATIONS TO DATE, WHICH MOVING FAR MORE RAPIDLY THAN SIMILAR OPERATION LAST YEAR.

2. GROUND TRANSPORT/OFF-LOADING: THANKS TO ASSIST FROM PCV MOTORMAC (MCGRATH) ALL BUT ONE OF 12 TEN-TON TRUCKS ASSIGNED TRANSPORT AIRLIFT GRAIN IN FIRST REGION IS ON LINE. FUEL SUPPLIES ADEQUATE. COLONEL HARP REPORTS AIRCRAFT OFF-LOADING BEING ACCOMPLISHED RAPIDLY AND THAT SUFFICIENT MANUAL LABOR/TRUCK TRANSPORT WAS BEING MADE AVAILABLE KEEP AIRLIFT OPS MOVING QUICKLY AND SMOOTHLY. HE PRAISED GOVERNOR AND OTHER FIRST REGION OFFICIALS FOR THEIR EFFORTS ASSURE AIRLIFT SUCCESS.

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3. TONNAGES LIFTED: AS REPORTED BY BAMAKO, AIRLIFT HAS NOW PASSED HALFWAY MARK WITH OVER 1600 MT DELIVERED AS OF SEPTEMBER 19. NEMA GOVERNOR NOTED THAT AIRLIFTED TONNAGE RECEIVED SO FAR EXCEEDS THAT DELIVERED OVERLAND BY GIRM TRUCK FLEET DURING FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF 1974. JTF COMMANDER ESTIMATES AIRLIFT OPERATIONS MAURITANIA WILL BE COMPLETED BY OCTOBER 7 AT PRESENT DELIVERY RATE.

4. ONLY PROBLEM (ASIDE FROM OCCASIONAL BAD WEATHER) REPORTED BY JTF COMMANDER IS DETERIORATION OF NEMA RUNWAY AFTER THREE WEEKS OF POUNDING BY HEAVILY LOADED C-130 TRANSPORTS. POTHOLES ARE BEGINNING TO APPEAR AT SEVERAL POINTS IN RUNWAY TARMAC, WHICH DESIGNED ACCOMMODATE LIGHT (DC-3) AIRCRAFT YET IS STILL HOLDING UP AMAZINGLY WELL UNDER SECOND C-130 AIRLIFT EFFORT IN TWO SUCCESSIVE YEARS. GOVERNOR HAS TAKEN ACTION FILL POTHOLE AND HAS PROMISED MAKE DAILY TEMPORARY REPAIRS TO RUNWAY UNTIL END OF AIRLIFT OPERATIONS. JTF COMMANDER HARP BELIEVES THAT SUCH TEMPORARY REPAIRS WILL ENABLE AIRLIFT CONTINUE UNTIL ALL 3,000 MT GRAIN DELIVERED TO NEMA.

5. GRAIN DISTRIBUTION WITHIN FIRST REGION PROCEEDING APACE. ABOUT HALF OF 1600-PLUS TONS AIRLIFTED ALREADY DISPATCHED TO OUTLYING DISTRIBUTION CENTERS. GOVERNOR HAS DRAWN UP AND IS EXECUTING DISTRIBUTION PLAN WHICH CALLS FOR DISTRIBUTION 950 OF 3000 MT LIFTED IN NEMA AREA. REMAINING TONNAGE BEING ALLOCATED AS FOLLOWS: TEMBEDRA 550, AMOURJ 450, DJUGUENI 450, WALAATA 300, BASSIKNOU 300. STORAGE FACILITIES ADEQUATE. DISTRIBUTION TO NOMADS--WHICH IS FREE IN MOST INSTANCES-- AVERAGES 10 KILOS PER PERSON WHILE SUPPLIES LASTS. THAT SMALL FRACTION OF POPULATION ABLE TO PAY FOR GRAIN IS CHARGED UM 15 (US THREE CENTS) PER KILO. SHURTLEFF

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